

US Economic History

3 Credits, Fulfills American Institutions (AI) Requirement

Chari Farr

E-Mail: charifarr5915@gmail.com

Phone: 509-435-5785 (text is preferred)

Econ 1740-090

Meets: online

Office Hours: online (or by appointment)

Course description:

This course examines the economic and social history of the United States from the colonial period to the present day. While the course is broad in scope, we will direct special attention to particular topics. These topics include changes in US labor markets, changes in living standards (and their measurement), and the history of female and minority labor.

Course objectives:

By the end of the semester, a student who is successful in this course will be able to

1. Identify the sources of economic growth in the US, including natural resource endowments, innovation and technological change, institutional change, and intra- and international trade (including innovations in communication and transportation),
2. Examine the effects of economic growth for the US population as a whole and for sub-populations, including the evolution of living standards, changes in the nature of work, and the increasing role of markets in people's lives,
3. Explain the importance of economic concepts and variables, including gross domestic product, income, wealth, unemployment, and inflation,
4. Discuss the evolution of US government policy as it relates to the economy, including the growth of the public sector over time, the regulation of the labor market (including the operation and abolition of slavery and the regulation of immigration), and the use of fiscal and monetary policy to mitigate the harmful effects of economic downturns, and
5. Apply historical insights to contemporary policy debates.

Texts and Other Materials:

- Walton and Rockoff, History of the American Economy, 12th EDITION. OH: Cengage, 2014.
- America: The Story of Us. (Video provided weekly in the reaction paper assignments online in Canvas)

Nondiscrimination and Accessibility Policy

The University of Utah does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, age, status as a disabled individual, sexual orientation, gender identity/expression, genetic information or protected veteran's status, in employment, treatment, admission, access to educational programs and activities, or other University benefits or services.

Additionally, the University endeavors to provide reasonable accommodations and to ensure equal access to qualified persons with disabilities. Inquiries concerning perceived discrimination or requests for disability accommodations may be referred to the University's Title IX/ADA/Section 504 Coordinator:

Director, Office of Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action

201 South Presidents Circle, Rm.135

Salt Lake City, UT, 84112

801-581-8365 (voice/tdd)

801-585-5746 (fax)

www.oeo.utah.edu.

Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act (ADA) and Sections 504 and 503 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1972 (Sections 503 & 504)

University policy, the ADA, and Sections 504 & 503, prohibit discrimination on the basis of a person's status as a person with a disability, require equal opportunity and access, a process for a person with a disability to request a reasonable accommodation, and a grievance process for an individual to complain of discrimination. The University endeavors to ensure that its campus and programs are accessible and in compliance with state and federal disability standards and to provide reasonable accommodations so as to remove a barrier that may prevent an individual with a disability from equally participating in academics, employment, or other University program. Reasonable accommodations may include specialized equipment, auxiliary aids, policy modifications, academic adjustments or other accommodation that is effective. University policy, as well as state and federal law, strictly prohibit retaliation against an individual for requesting a disability accommodation, for participating in a disability discrimination complaint process.

Academic Dishonesty

"All students are expected to maintain professional behavior in the classroom setting, according to the Student Code, spelled out in the Student Handbook. Students have specific rights in the classroom as detailed in Article III of the Code. The Code also specifies proscribed conduct (Article XI) that involves cheating on tests, plagiarism, and/or collusion, as well as fraud, theft, etc. Students should read the Code carefully and know they are responsible for the content. According to Faculty Rules and Regulations, it is the faculty responsibility to enforce responsible classroom behaviors, and I will do so, beginning with verbal warnings and progressing to dismissal from class and a failing grade. Students have the right to appeal such action to the Student Behavior Committee."

Cheating and plagiarism are not tolerated in this course. All instances of plagiarism and cheating will be reported to the university. The first instance will receive a grade of zero for that assignment, exam, etc. The second will result in a further action, and at the instructor's discretion a failing grade in the class may be given and potential disciplinary action by the university may be taken.

Requirements and Grading:

WEEKLY QUIZZES (approx. 130 points ****this may change****)

Each week you will take a short (10 question, 10 point) quiz based on the material in the lectures and textbook. The quiz will be timed (15 minutes for each quiz). Quizzes will be open the entire week of the material, and are due Monday 5pm of the following week. (For example, the quiz for Week 3 is open all of Week 3 and is due by Monday 5pm of Week 4. Due dates are set in Canvas to remind you!) **The quizzes are closed book/note/internet and you are expected to work alone.** You will have access to the answers to the quiz questions once the quiz closes for the week.

*Quizzes must be taken by the due date, so plan your time accordingly. Only in extreme cases may a quiz be taken once it closes.

REACTION PAPERS (100 points + 10 possible extra credit points)

Each week you will watch a video online (approx. 45 min). You are required to submit a (minimum) one-page (approx. 350 words) reaction paper to these videos. Each reaction is worth 10 points: 5 points is for content and 5 points for format (to be explained later). You will have access to the video the entire week of the material, and Reaction Papers are due Monday 5pm of the following week. (For example, the Reaction Paper for Week 3 is open all of Week 3 and is due by Monday 5pm of Week 4. Due dates are set in Canvas to remind you!)

***Note:** Late papers may be accepted, at a penalty. The penalty is as follows: you will receive a 2-point deduction for each day. 5pm marks the end of the “day”, so if you turn your paper in at 6pm on Tuesday, that is considered 2 days late. Friday 5pm of the following week is the cut off for late papers.

Content: You will be provided with prompts (up until the first exam), to help you to think about the material as you watch the video. These prompts will be your guide for what to write. You are expected to put thought in your answers and respond intelligibly. You are encouraged to support your answers with material from the video, lecture, and textbook, as well as outside sources. **You must clearly indicate your source, and if you directly quote any material, you must clearly indicate what has been quoted along with indicating the source of the quoted material.** If you quote material without clearly indicating so, you will receive a 0 for the assignment and a warning. If it happens a second time, additional action will be taken in accordance with the college. (See: Academic integrity Policy, <http://www.regulations.utah.edu/academics/6-400.html>)

Format: Although these reactions are only one page, you are expected to submit well-written papers. These will be graded not only on the thoughts submitted, but also on grammar and cohesiveness.

****Formatting expectations:** double spaced, 12 pt standard font (Times New Roman or Arial), 1” margins, no 1st or 2nd person in your writing, nothing but your name at the top. A rubric is also provided in the assignment for you to follow!

EXAMS (300 points)

There will be three exams: two midterms and a final. Each exam is worth 100 points.

The two midterms have the same structure: the exam will open Wednesday and remain open until Wednesday, 5pm of the next week. Exams 1 & 2 consist of a mix of multiple choice and short essay questions. Each exam is timed and you are required to take the exam in the testing center. You will need to schedule time to take the exams in the Testing Center during exam week (information is provided if this is new to you). **Exam 1 will take place during Week 4. Exam 2 will be during Week 8.**

**** You are expected to work alone, without the use of any materials (including the internet) on both Exam 1 and Exam 2.** Any instances of cheating or plagiarism will result in a zero for the entire exam (both the multiple choice and essay question portions).

The final exam will become available the Wednesday before finals week (Week 11). The final is not cumulative and will be all short essay questions. You may discuss these questions with other students, however you must all write and submit your own answers. This is not timed; it just must be uploaded by the due date. The final exam is due

*All exams must be taken during the week they are assigned. Plan your time accordingly so you are able to complete the exam by the due date. Exams may not be taken before the week they are assigned either. Late exams may be given in cases of documented medical or other emergency. Otherwise, failure to take an exam at the scheduled time will result in a 0 for the exam.

PARTICIPATION (approx. 120 points)

Each week you will participate in an online discussion with a small group of students (approx. 10 people per group). First you will submit a post about a topic that you found most interesting for the week (“thoughts for discussions” are given at the end of each lectures). A full-point post will contain substance and thought about a topic, bringing a new perspective than what was presented in the material. You may receive **up to 4 points for the post**. Your post must be submitted no later than 5:00pm, Friday each week to receive full points. (Each day late will be deducted 1 point from the total points earned.) A rubric is provided for clarity on expectations.

You will then respond to at least two posts that other students have posted. You will receive **up to 3 points for each response** (graded based on quality of response). You may respond to as many as you want, and extended discussions are highly encouraged, but you are required to respond to two. Responses are due by 5:00pm Monday of the following week. A rubric is provided for clarity on expectations.

RESEARCH PROJECT (150 points)

You will complete a research project relevant to the history of the US Economy. There is a list of topics provided that you can choose from, but you may also select a topic not from the list. (You need approval of topics not on the list before you begin.) A specific Research Project module has been created with a page containing the list of topics, guidelines for the project, and all the details of each piece of the project, as well as due dates.

EXTRA CREDIT

After each exam, you will have the opportunity to watch a video and write a reaction paper for up to 10 points extra credit.

In addition, you are only required to submit 10 of the 11 assigned reaction papers. You have the option to do all 11 reaction papers, for an additional 10 points extra credit.

There will be no other extra credit offered.

Grading of assignments:

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|---------------------------|----------------------|
| Exams (100 points each) | 300 points |
| Participation (approx.) | 120 points |
| Reading quizzes (approx.) | 130 points |
| Reaction papers | 100 points |
| Research paper | 150 points |
| ----- | |
| Total | (approx.) 800 points |

Grade Scale

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|---------------|---------------|
| A: 93+ | C: 70 – 74.9 |
| A-: 90 - 92.9 | C-: 65 – 69.9 |
| B+: 87 - 89.9 | D+: 63 – 64.9 |
| B: 83 - 86.9 | D: 57 – 62.9 |
| B-: 80 - 82.9 | D-: 55 – 56.9 |
| C+: 75 - 79.9 | E: < 55 |

Note that I do not round grades, and I do not curve.

Other things to keep in mind:

- 1) While this class is online, you are expected to stay on top of all material. The material is only available for the week that it is covered. I will be available almost any time of day or night to answer questions. While this is an online class, email is the best way to get a hold of me. I am also perfectly happy to received texts – this is the fastest way to find me!
- 2) Canvas will be utilized for submitting all of the assignments as well as for posting grades. You may not email me any assignments, unless I say otherwise. You are responsible for monitoring your grades on Canvas that are posted throughout the semester and making me aware of any discrepancies or concerns on or before the last day of class. No changes will be made after the Friday of finals week, to any grades on assignments, exams, etc., posted to or recorded on Canvas prior to that date.
- 3) Make-up assignments will be given at the discretion of the instructor, only for very serious medical reasons, and **only if cleared in advance**.
- 4) You are expected to post and respond to discussions each week. While you are not required to attend an actual classroom, you must plan to spend time in the “virtual classroom” (i.e. Canvas) on a regular basis. I will be posting announcements, assignments, and grades all online, and you are responsible for staying on top of the information I post.
- 5) Cheating in any form will not be tolerated. Any indication of cheating will be handled in accordance with the university’s academic integrity policy.

| Date | Topics | Readings; Project due dates |
|------------------|---|---|
| Section 1 | Chapters 1 – 14 | |
| Week 1 | Introductions; Overview; Growth, Welfare and the American Economy; Founding the Colonies; Colonial Economic Activities; Economic Relations of the Colonies; Economic Progress and Wealth | Chapter 1 - 5 |
| Week 2 | Three Crises and Revolt; Hard Realities for a New Nation | Chapter 6 & 7 **Topic choice due |
| Week 3 | Land and Early Westward Movements; Transportation and Market Growth; Market Expansion and Industry in First Transition; Labor during the Early Industrial Period; Money and Banking in the Developing Economy | Chapters 8-12 |
| Week 4 | The Entrenchment of Slavery and Regional Conflict; War, Recovery and Regional Divergence | Chapters 13 & 14 |
| | **EXAM 1** (Open Wed. Week 4 – Wed. Week 5) | (Covers Chapters 2 – 14) |
| Section 2 | Chapters 15 – 24 | |
| Week 5 | Agriculture's Western Advance; Railroads and Economic Change | Chapters 15 & 16 **Proposal due |
| Week 6 | Industrial Expansion and Concentration; The Emergence of America's Labor Consciousness | Chapters 17 & 18 |
| Week 7 | Money, Prices, and Finance in the Postbellum Era; Commerce at Home and Abroad; The Roaring Twenties | Chapters 19, 20 & 22 |
| Week 8 | The Great Depression; The New Deal | Chapters 23 & 24 **Annotated Bibliography due |
| | **EXAM 2** (Open Wed. Week 8 – Wed. Week 9) | (Covers Chapters 15 – 24) |
| Section 3 | Chapters 25 – 30 | |
| Week 9 | World War II | Chapter 25 **Outline due |
| Week 10 | The Changing Role of Government: Federal Spending in Peace and War; The Changing Role of Government: Consumer Safety, Agriculture, the Environment and Housing | Chapters 26 & 27 |

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|----------------------------------|---|---|
| Week 11 | Monetary Policy, Fiscal Policy and Business Cycles after World War II; Manufacturing, Productivity and Labor; Achievements of the Past, Challenges for the Future | Chapters 28, 29 & 30 |
| Week 12 (Finals Week) | **FINAL EXAM** (Opens Wed. Week 11) | **Paper and Presentation due **Peer Review due |